

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 and 7-10 are currently pending in this case, Claims 13-24 being withdrawn as directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 5-6, and 11-12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 1 and 7 have been amended by the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 7 was objected to for clarification; Claims 1-5 and 7-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,285,050 by Emma et al.; Claims 6 and 12 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Office Action indication that Claims 6 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, because the prior art does not teach or suggest the claimed limitations.

In response to the objection to Claim 7, the language has been reviewed and clarified.

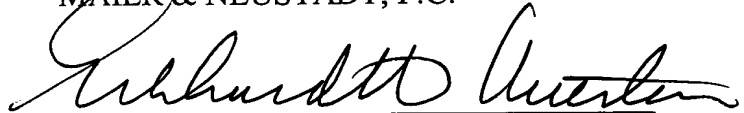
Claim 1 and Claim 7 have been amended to include the limitations recited in the original Claim 6 and Claim 12 respectively. The applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 1 and Claim 7 patentably distinguish over U.S. Patent 6,285,050 by Emma et al. . Consequently, Claims 2-4, and 8-10 depending on Claim 1 and Claim 7 respectively, now patentably define over the cited art.

Application No. 10/618,020
Reply to Office Action of August 13, 2004

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eckhard H. Kuesters', written over a horizontal line.

Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)